

Appl. No. 10/605,496
Amd. Dated September 2, 2005
Reply to Office Action Dated June 7th, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 -23 remain in the pending application. Claims 1-6 have been rejected. Applicant notes with appreciation that Claims 7-23 have been allowed.

Interview Summary

On August 31, 2005, Applicant held a telephone interview with Examiner Neuder. The substance of the interview is set forth below in response to the rejections for Double Patenting and lack of novelty under 35 USC § 102. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the application in view of the following remarks:

Double Patenting Rejection

The Examiner rejected claims 1-6 for Double Patenting in view of US Patent No. 6,840,336. The applicant submits that the claims of this pending application are not co-extensive in scope to that of US Patent 6,840,336. Claim 1 of the present application recites a directional casing drilling system comprising a casing string for rotation of a drill bit; a shaft coupled to the casing string. No such features are disclosed or claimed in US Patent No. 6,840,336. US Patent No. 6,840,336 relates to conventional drilling and has no disclosure or claim limitations relating to casing drilling. Applicant, therefore, submits that the double patenting rejection is not applicable and asks that it be re-considered and withdrawn.

Rejection Under 35 USC § 102

The Examiner rejected Claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 based on US Patent Application No. 2001/0011591. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

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As discussed above, Claim 1 recites a directional casing drilling system comprising a casing string for rotation of a drill bit; a shaft coupled to the casing string. No such features are disclosed or claimed in US Patent No. 2001/0011591 to Van-Drentham.

Van-Drentham relates to a downhole cutting guide tool which is used for cutting or milling windows in oil well casing. Van-Drentham fails to even contemplate any type of casing drilling. In fact, Van-Drentham reference teaches away from the claimed invention by teaching that the tool cuts windows in the casing which requires the tool to be capable of movement relative to the casing, and that the tool is rotated using a mud motor.

In view of the above, Applicant submits that Van-Drentham fails to anticipate or support a finding of obviousness of any of the pending claims. Applicant, therefore requests withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. Applicant believes this reply to be fully responsive to all outstanding issues and place this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, do not hesitate to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

This paper is submitted in response to the Office Action dated June 7th, 2005 for which the three month date for response is September 7th, 2005. Please apply any charges not covered, such as any extension request required, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-2898 (Reference Number 19.0318 US).

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SCHLUMBERGER

NO. 603 P. 10

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9/2/05

Respectfully submitted,

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